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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTY-FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 13 May 1991, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. PEERTHUM (Mauritius)
(Vice-President)

- Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (Article 19 of the Charter) [125] (continued)

- Adoption of the agenda and organization of work of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly and allocation of items: request for the inclusion of an additional item submitted by the Secretary-General [8] (continued)

- Special economic and disaster relief assistance: draft resolution [86] (continued)

- Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations [117] (continued)

  (a) Report of the Secretary-General

/...

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(b) Letter from Ghana

(c) Letter from Luxembourg

(d) Letter from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden

(e) Draft resolution

- Programme of work

In the absence of the President, Mr. Peerthum (Mauritius), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 125 (continued)

SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (ARTICLE 19 OF THE CHARTER) (A/45/1004/Add.1)

The PRESIDENT: Before turning to the first item on our agenda for this morning, I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to document A/45/1004/Add.1, which contains a letter addressed to the President of the General Assembly by the Secretary-General informing him that, since the issuance of his communication dated 29 April 1991, Benin has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 8 (continued)

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK OF THE FORTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS: REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM SUBMITTED BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/45/241 and Add.1)

The PRESIDENT: In connection with this item, a note by and a report of the Secretary-General have been circulated in documents A/45/241 and A/45/241/Add.1. In his note the Secretary-General, pursuant to rule 15 of the rules of procedure, requests that an additional item of an important and urgent character be placed on the agenda, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara". Owing to the nature of that item, he also requests that the item be allocated to the Fifth Committee for consideration.

(The President)

In the circumstances of the present case, may I take it that the General Assembly agrees that the provision of rule 40 of the rules of procedure, which would require a meeting of the General Committee on the question of the inclusion of an additional item on the agenda, can be waived?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: May I also take it that the Assembly wishes to include an additional item to read as follows: "Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara", and to allocate that item to the Fifth Committee for consideration?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The Chairman of the Fifth Committee will be informed of the decision just taken.

AGENDA ITEM 86 (continued)

SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE: DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/45/L.48/Rev.1)

The PRESIDENT: We shall next consider the question of emergency assistance to Bangladesh. In this connection, a draft resolution entitled "Emergency assistance to Bangladesh in the wake of the devastating cyclone" has been issued as document A/45/L.48/Rev.1.

The Assembly will also consider at its next meeting, under agenda item 86, the question of special emergency assistance to Haiti. In that connection, a draft resolution entitled "Special emergency assistance to Haiti" will be submitted and circulated shortly.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution contained in document A/45/L.48/Rev.1. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/45/L.48/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/45/L.48/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 45/263).

Mr. AHMED (Bangladesh): I speak overwhelmed by a sense of gratitude. The Bangladesh delegation is deeply touched by the Assembly's expression of solidarity with our suffering millions at this hour of our great sorrow. Through you, Sir, I thank all delegations for their unanimous adoption of this resolution, to which we attach the utmost importance.

The human tragedy in the aftermath of the worst cyclone ever in our living memory has been colossal. It has left over 140,000 dead. This figure may rise as more information becomes available from remoter parts. Many more have been rendered homeless. More than 10 million people have been affected. In many areas, infrastructures have been totally destroyed. Standing crops, awaiting what might have been a bumper harvest, have been washed away. Extensive damage has been sustained by telecommunications installations.

(Mr. Ahmed, Bangladesh)

The Government of Prime Minister Mrs. Khaleda Zia has mobilized all the resources, personal and national, at her command to address the massive task that now confronts us. You are well aware of Bangladesh's many and varied constraints. We cannot meet our present needs by ourselves. We need prayers. We need support. We need understanding. That is why our Prime Minister has launched her appeal to the international community for assistance.

Already a comprehensive list of requirements for immediate relief, short-term rehabilitation and longer-term reconstruction has been prepared. The preliminary assessment shows the requirement for relief and follow-up rehabilitation to be $1.4 billion.

The Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, has already undertaken several measures for which we are all in his debt. Apart from issuing a worldwide call for assistance, he was instrumental in organizing a visit to the affected region by Mr. M'Hamed Essaafi, the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator. He and his colleagues at UNDRO are performing their tasks in a most commendable manner. A number of United Nations agencies have also become actively and constructively involved.

The adoption of this important resolution by this Assembly will without a doubt add impetus to our endeavour. It will, we hope, serve positively by acting as a catalyst for global efforts to support and assist Bangladesh.

Many have responded, and many more are responding most generously now. They include States and Governments, non-governmental organizations, men and women of God, schoolchildren, even ordinary people in the street. They come from near home and from faraway places. Diplomatic colleagues in New York have written me personal letters expressing deep distress. Many have conveyed their condolences to me in person. We cannot thank them all individually, for

(Mr. Ahmed, Bangladesh)

which we apologize, but their expressions of solidarity will give us the strength and fortitude to overcome our crisis. With your support, understanding and prayer, Sir, and those of our other brothers and sisters in the international community, we shall indeed overcome.

Our requirements, as you know, are great. It is our hope that adequate help will be forthcoming. This is an age of global unity, and one way to show that unity is when the pain of some is shared by all so that, when it is alleviated, all can share the resultant satisfaction. We again thank you, Sir, and the delegations present here, for having adopted the resolution.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 86.

ITEM 117 (continued)

REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS

(a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/45/714)

(b) LETTER FROM GHANA (A/45/991)

(c) LETTER FROM LUXEMBOURG (A/45/999)

(d) LETTER FROM DENMARK, FINLAND, ICELAND, NORWAY AND SWEDEN (A/45/1001)

(e) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/45/L.49)

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now resume its consideration of agenda item 117, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations".

Members will recall that at our 73rd plenary meeting, held on Monday, 29 April, I informed the Assembly that members would meet in informal consultations on the question of the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields, with a view to preparing a

(The President)

broad-based resolution. Members will also recall that, at our 74th plenary meeting, held on Friday, 3 May, I further informed the Assembly that consultations were still proceeding.

I am pleased to inform you now that members have concluded their informal consultations, and a draft resolution has been circulated this morning as document A/45/L.49. In this connection, I should like to point out that this item has been included in our agenda for this morning at the request of a number of delegations which have asked that the draft resolution should be considered and decided upon at this meeting.

In fairness to all members, I wish to consult you before proceeding to discuss and take a decision on the draft resolution before us. I should like to quote from rule 78 of the rules of procedure, in regard to proposals before the Assembly:

> "... As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting. ..."

In view of the desire of members to dispose of this item expeditiously, I seek your concurrence with the request that we should proceed to discuss and take a decision on the draft resolution contained in document A/45/L.49, even though it was distributed only this morning.

In the absence of any objections, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees with this proposal.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Fiji to introduce draft resolution A/45/L.49.

Mr. THOMPSON (Fiji): In my capacity as a Vice-President of the General Assembly and as chairman of the informal consultations, I have the honour of introducing to the General Assembly the draft resolution entitled "Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields", which appears in document A/45/L.49.

The draft resolution is the result of a number of weeks of arduous work on the part of the many Member States which contributed to its formulation. Discussion of the subject commenced on Tuesday, 16 April, when the President of the General Assembly initiated informal consultations on agenda item 117 in preparation for the resumed meetings of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly which had been scheduled to begin on 29 April. Thereafter the President charged me with conducting the informal consultations on his behalf.

The first set of consultations under my chairmanship was convened on Thursday, 18 April. Since that date, informal consultations have been held on a daily basis as delegations initially sought to reach agreement on a text that could be adopted at the resumed meetings convened specifically for that purpose. Unfortunately, the complexity of the issues under review did not allow for a speedy conclusion to our labours. I believe nevertheless that the extra time granted to us has been well spent, and that the draft before the Assembly is a worthy product, albeit one derived from a lengthy experience.

At the start of the consultations, the delegations involved agreed to my suggestion that we should use the proposals submitted by the Group of 77 as a basis for our work. These proposals are to be found in document A/45/991. Subsequently, the European Community and the Nordic countries also submitted written proposals, which appear in documents A/45/999 and A/45/1001.

(Mr. Thompson, Fiji)

During the course of our consultations, other delegations made informal papers available, and I wish to mention the contributions of Australia and Japan in this regard. In addition, a number of other delegations participated actively and helped to fashion the agreed language of the resolution which is before members. While the final text draws heavily on the original proposals of the Group of 77, it is also reflective of the combined efforts of a wide spectrum of Member States.

I believe that the draft resolution which is before the Assembly represents an important step in the process of revitalization and restructuring of the economic, social and related sectors of the Organization. The draft resolution contains significant recommendations about the organization and methods of work of the Economic and Social Council which, if fully and effectively implemented, should contribute to the Council's reclaiming the role assigned to it in the Charter. The draft resolution identifies issues to be addressed in the future and lays down a timetable to that end. It contains carefully crafted arrangements for regular reviews, so as to ensure that the course which has been charted is followed. Above all, it recognizes that revitalization and restructuring is a necessary process but also a long one, which will require the continuing and active involvement of delegations and Secretariat alike.

I would like to thank all the delegations which were involved in these consultations for their unfailing courtesies extended to me at all times, and the Secretariat staff who provided invaluable support and guidance. On behalf of the Member States which took part in the informal consultations, I am honoured to commend draft resolution A/45/L.49 to the Assembly for adoption.

The PRESIDENT: I congratulate the representative of Fiji on the successful completion of the consultations he has so ably directed.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/45/L.49. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/45/L.49 was adopted (resolution 45/264).

The PRESIDENT: May I remind delegations that, in accordance with decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes. I call first on the representative of Ghana, who will speak on behalf of the Group of 77.

Mr. KUFUOR (Ghana): The Group of 77 welcomes the adoption by consensus of draft resolution A/45/L.49 on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. The Group of 77 took the initiative to present proposals in this regard out of a keen sense of the need to restructure and revitalize the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields in order to make it more responsive to the development challenges and objectives of the 1990s and beyond, as defined in the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, contained in General Assembly resolution S-18/3, and other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, as well as in the Charter.

The consensus we have achieved today has been made possible by the general agreement that this undertaking must be seen as a process entailing a step-by-step approach. Thus, at this resumed session, the General Assembly

(Mr. Kufuor, Ghana)

focused on measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the Economic and Social Council. Important decisions have been made with regard to the organization and reporting procedures of the Council, which should give it a new sense of purpose and direction, enabling it to fulfil its charter and other responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

At the forty-sixth session, the General Assembly will focus of the review of the subsidiary machinery in the economic, social and related fields. The Group of 77 hopes that the same constructive spirit that characterized our deliberations at this resumed session will be brought to the Assembly's consideration of this question. Further steps in this process will include a resumed forty-seventh session to consider the composition of the Council, and a review of the complementarity between the work of the Council and that of the General Assembly at the forty-seventh session. A general review will be undertaken at the forty-eighth session. In all this, we should be guided by the basic principles upon which we have agreed, so that the measures that we adopt in the whole process will be focused, coherent and consistent.

In this regard, it is important to emphasize that the Group of 77 sees the restructuring process as primarily an intergovernmental responsibility which must be pursued in that context. We also wish to emphasize that the principle of equitable geographical representation, on the basis of which membership of the various bodies and organs is determined, will be respected in all cases.

Permit me, Sir, to pay tribute to Mr. Winston Thompson, whose wise and skilful guidance of our deliberations enabled us to achieve the results that all Members present happily celebrate. Throughout the difficult and protracted negotiations, he showed heroic patience and understanding, and we

(Mr. Kufuor, Ghana)

are indeed very grateful to him. We also wish to thank our partners for their cooperation and understanding, and we hope that our next effort will be equally rewarding and interesting.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Sweden, who will speak on behalf of the Nordic countries.

Mr. ELIASSON (Sweden): During the last few weeks, we have together gone through a long and thorough negotiating process. All countries and groups have made valuable contributions to this process. Constructive proposals and a willingness on all parts to work together in a spirit of common objectives and in an atmosphere of compromise have made it possible for this resumed session of the General Assembly to agree on a substantial reform programme. The Nordic countries wish to pay a cordial and sincere tribute to the Chairman, Mr. Winston Thompson, for his patient and tireless efforts during the informal consultations.

The document that is before the Assembly contains a number of important elements which could have great consequences for the United Nations. A preliminary assessment of the document warrants the conclusion that substantial changes will be introduced in the work of the United Nations in the economic and social fields, perhaps for the first time. Therefore the Nordic countries give their full support to the reform programme that members today have adopted.

The Nordic countries particularly appreciate the measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the Economic and Social Council. These measures could turn the Council into a vital and forceful centre for the activities of the United Nations in the economic and social fields. Of particular importance are the measures dealing with the high-level and

(Mr. Eliasson, Sweden)

coordination segments of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council. We believe that these measures could contribute to more meaningful and more relevant debates in the Council, with a real impact on developments. They could also lead to a much-needed improvement in the coherence of the United Nations system.

What we now have to do is to continue our efforts to ensure that the reform measures for the Council that we have agreed upon are effectively implemented. We must take measures as early as this year to make certain that the new Council we are creating will function properly from the start in 1992.

The Nordic countries have consistently maintained that we have to embark on a long-term United Nations reform process, a process which, besides a number of immediate reform measures, must encompass a wider perspective and a more precise agenda for the future. This could, perhaps, have been spelt out even more clearly in the document which is before the Assembly.

(Mr. Eliasson, Sweden)

It is, however, clear that reforms of the Economic and Social Council are not enough. Nor can they be seen in isolation. The work of the subsidiary bodies of the Council and the General Assembly should be enhanced through appropriate reform measures. The work of the General Assembly should also be strengthened in order to have a real political impact. The Nordic countries, therefore, attach great importance to the reviews foreseen regarding the subsidiary bodies and the complementarity between the Council and the General Assembly. Without concrete reform measures as a result of these reviews the reform process will give only limited results.

The Nordic countries are confident that the continued reform process will achieve further substantial results if we can carry on our work in the positive and constructive spirit which has characterized these meetings. Substantial results are called for also in the future if we are to forge an instrument which is effective and strong enough to deal with the expectations of the world and which can help us achieve our common tasks, namely, to combat poverty and other fundamental development problems and to manage the increased global interdependence.

To conclude, I should like to reiterate that the Nordic countries stand ready to continue to participate actively and constructively in the reform process that will now be set in motion. We look forward to being able to endorse in this Assembly further concrete reform measures, aimed at strengthening the role of the United Nations in the economic and social fields.

Mr. LAVROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The resolution just adopted by the General Assembly cannot be

(Mr. Lavrov, USSR)

described as routine. What we are approaching, in essence, is the practical realization of the consensus decisions regarding ways of implementing action taken on economic development at the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly. The negotiations have revealed the various approaches to solving a number of problems considered during the last month, including politically sensitive problems. It is important that at critical moments all delegations demonstrated the political will and desire for constructive cooperation, which ultimately determined the success of the negotiations. We appreciate the contribution made by all delegations, particularly by the members of the Group of 77, which not only became the initiators of this measure, but which also submitted interesting documents, which were at the centre of attention in the negotiations. I should like particularly to highlight the outstanding personal contribution at the unofficial consultations of the Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations, Ambassador Thompson.

The document adopted today contains a solid package of measures the practical implementation of which will make it possible seriously to enhance the authority of the social and economic activities of the United Nations and determine its new role in multilateral economic dialogue. We note with satisfaction that the work of the renewed session of the Economic and Social Council will be aimed at overcoming sectoral particularities of the problems of the United Nations in the economic, social and humanitarian areas. The Economic and Social Council has to ensure a synthesis of the results of the work of the individual sectors and organs in the political recommendations for the General Assembly.

It is also important that this strategy of taking further steps for continuing the reforms is being carried out. In our view, the stage by stage

(Mr. Lavrov, USSR)

implementation of these measures should become part of a broader process of reform of the United Nations as a whole and of the system of the specialized agencies.

We shall constructively cooperate with all countries to see to it that this process is based on the spirit and letter of the United Nations Charter and that it will promote the implementation of its potential, which is far from being exhausted at present. As a result of the agreements achieved, we have a good earnest of progress in the future, and the Soviet delegation is ready to promote further efforts to improve the social and economic activities of the United Nations in order to enhance its effectiveness and adaptation to the new political and economic realities.

Mr. FEYDER (Luxembourg) (interpretation from French): It is my honour to speak on behalf of the European Community and its 12 member States.

The European Community and its member States welcome the important results which have been achieved following the work done over the past few weeks on the question of the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields. This result may be found in the document annexed to the resolution just adopted by the General Assembly by consensus. It is the first time in the history of the United Nations that it has thus become possible to bring about a series of reforms which will make it possible more profitably, more rationally and more effectively to organize our work in the economic and social fields.

The United Nations should now be in a better position to discharge its important present and future responsibilities in these fields. The reforms agreed upon imply an in-depth reorganization of the work of the Economic and

(Mr. Feyder, Luxembourg)

Social Council. They also imply a more consistent and rational structure and a more promising preparation of that work.

But the agreement concluded goes beyond a decision on a series of essentially organizational measures. First, it is also based on a series of principles, guidelines and objectives. These indicate clearly the spirit and foundation on which reforms are to be undertaken and they are important milestones in carrying out that restructuring.

The European Community and its 12 member States consider, in this context, that it is important for all to agree that these reforms must be carried out as part of a restructuring and revitalization process which is continuing. This organized process must have the effect of strengthening the transparency, flexibility and adaptability of the organization and, therefore, of its coordinating strength. The course of action thus chosen must also lead us gradually to effective participation in our work by all the protagonists in the economic and social life, governmental and non-governmental, including organizations of regional economic integration.

In the view of the 12 member States, it was essential that a time-table and specific criteria for future work be established. This should lead us to consider, at the next session of the General Assembly, the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council. The European Community and its 12 member States are determined to undertake the necessary preparatory work in the coming weeks.

(Mr. Feyder, Luxembourg)

This timetable also covers the work on complementarity between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council which will be done in the General Assembly next year. The composition of the Economic and Social Council will also be reconsidered by the Assembly at its next session. It was also agreed that we would proceed to a structural reform of the Secretariat. Lastly, a comprehensive review of measures adopted will be undertaken at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

For the European Community and its 12 member States, this success has a broader political significance as well. First of all, it confirms the excellent climate of cooperation that exists among Member States in the economic and social fields. Secondly, it confirms that real progress can be achieved on the basis of consensus rather than by a pointless strengthening of majorities. It shows the existence of a common and unanimous political will to make the United Nations an instrument for more effective discussion and action. It also shows that Member States, far from being intimidated by certain past failures, have learned from them. This is also how we interpret the approach taken, namely, that of setting more realistic goals in the immediate future while placing the action undertaken within the framework of an ongoing process.

Convinced as we are of the importance of the mission the United Nations must carry out in the economic and social fields, the Twelve began preparatory work for this exercise in January of this year and have held a considerable number of informal meetings. They have contributed significantly to the results that have been obtained, first, by making available to delegations a document reflecting their position and, secondly, by participating actively in

(Mr. Feyder, Luxembourg)

the negotiations that have taken place. We are delighted that many of our proposals have been incorporated in the document just adopted.

The Twelve wish to thank all the delegations that have made this success possible. We should particularly like to emphasize the credit that should go to the members of the Group of 77, which took the initiative behind this reform action last December and played a key role in the negotiations. We should also like to express our gratitude to Ambassador Awoonor and Mr. Kufuor of Ghana and to Ambassador Umer of Pakistan, who expressed the Group's positions in such an able manner and in such a constructive spirit. Our special thanks go to Ambassador Thompson of Fiji, who, in the course of the past four weeks, conducted negotiations with a talent, patience and calm that impressed us all. Tribute must also be paid to all who have demonstrated special interest in this complex task and who, with their imaginative contributions, helped to overcome the difficulties encountered.

The agreement reached today can strengthen the broader spirit of reform that exists in the United Nations. While strengthening that spirit, it also demonstrates the increased confidence Member States have in the adaptability, vitality and dynamism of the United Nations - that is to say, in its ability to cope with present and future challenges.

Mr. SEZAKI (Japan): My delegation would like to join earlier speakers in expressing its gratitude with regard to the resolution we have just adopted. That resolution is the result of long and hard negotiations among us, which reflected the importance we have all attached to it. Indeed, by adopting the resolution, we have once again embarked upon the formidable tasks of revitalizing the United Nations in the economic, social and related areas.

(Mr. Sezaki, Japan)

The task ahead of us is full of challenges. The result of this pledging session is only the first forward step in a long process. The establishment of a consolidated session of the Economic and Social Council is a significant achievement, but we cannot take full advantage of it if other arrangements in the area remain unchanged in the future. First, we have to pursue vigorously the rationalization of the work of the Economic and Social Council. Unless we significantly streamline the Council's agenda, the new arrangement will only mean a further burden on its work and will not contribute to the efficiency we would like to see in it.

Secondly, the subsidiary bodies in the economic, social and related fields and their reporting arrangements represent another area in which substantial restructuring is needed. In this respect, the work of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) must be examined, especially as regards its relation to the work of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The work of the General Assembly, and especially the work of the Second and Third Committees, must be reviewed with a view to avoiding duplication and to streamlining their procedure.

While the reform process is intergovernmental in nature, that does not negate the responsibility of the Secretariat in making its work as efficient as possible. The Secretariat should not adopt a wait-and-see attitude but should vigorously pursue its tasks in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and such relevant resolutions as General Assembly resolution 41/213.

During the negotiations, my delegation, among others, emphasized the importance of holding the sessions of the Economic and Social Council in New

(Mr. Sezaki, Japan)

York, as well as the question of redistributing the current seats on the Council. We hope that those matters will be reviewed seriously in the future.

Lastly, I cannot conclude my statement without paying a high tribute to Ambassador Thompson of Fiji, without whose efforts and perseverance we would never have reached an agreement. Ambassador Thompson deserves our special appreciation.

Mr. MARKS (United States of America): It is a great privilege and honour for me today to speak on this subject on behalf of the United States delegation, of the United States Government and of the over 200 million Americans who have the privilege and honour of being citizens of the host country to the United Nations. It is an honour for me and for our colleagues today to talk about the resolution we have just adopted, which represents several weeks of intense but serious work, and to compliment all members on the quality of the resolution, the quality of the progress we have made and the work we have accomplished. That work has been marked by a spirit of compromise and cooperation and by a spirit of consensus, which has been commented upon by all the preceding speakers.

My delegation would also like to take this opportunity to note particularly and with deeply felt appreciation the leadership given to our work and to our group by His Excellency the Ambassador of Fiji, the Honourable Winston Thompson. We could not have got where we have in the time we did without his effort and his wisdom.

(Mr. Marks, United States)

From the beginning my delegation believed, along with many others, that we had an opportunity this year to achieve modest but very real success. We have done exactly that. We have moved; we have achieved something with many implications for the future. As has been noted, we consider this to be a first step in a significant process. We hope that the resolution, aside from its own virtues, will give a great impetus to that process.

As I have noted, my delegation believes that the resolution achieves in a sense only modest objectives, but they are important, not only for their own value, but because they are modest. We decided deliberately to concentrate on the heart of the question of reform of the economic and social activities of the United Nations - the Economic and Social Council itself. By concentrating on that body, we have been able to reach agreement on reforms which have great implications for the future activities of the United Nations in the economic and social areas.

We have specifically agreed on important changes in the Council's sessional and organizational arrangements. These are important changes which carry great hope for the future. They also create new responsibilities. The resolution creates new responsibilities for delegations, with regard to how they behave in this reorganized Council to achieve the objectives we hope to achieve. It also places new responsibilities on the secretariat, both in terms of changes the secretariat must make within itself, but also in terms of changes we are not even sure of yet; as the Council changes, the secretariat will have to change in the future.

The resolution also has important implications for the Council's subsidiary bodies. We have made a commitment to deal with that matter in the near future.

(Mr. Marks, United States)

As well as having implications for the secretariat - changes in its working level, organization and schedule - the resolution has implications for the General Assembly in the near future.

Nevertheless, we hope and believe that the changes contained in the resolution will lead to our one single, hoped-for result - a better organized, more effective and more efficient United Nations in the economic and social areas.

In my delegation's view, the resolution is particularly notable for the specific, concrete changes that have been made in the sessional and organizational arrangements of the Economic and Social Council. These are real.

Many delegations have also been concerned about the question of the principles that will direct the changes we have made now and future change. Much discussion has gone into the organization and drafting of this set of principles, and we are all confident in them. We are particularly hopeful that these principles will in the future guide our work of reform in a manner that will be free of political ideology and old-fashioned partisanship, and will direct us towards work that will again lead to a better organized, more efficient and more effective United Nations in the economic and social fields.

Mrs. FREUDENSCHUSS-REICHL (Austria): My delegation attaches great importance to the work of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. It is therefore very important for us to see the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of the United Nations in these fields enhanced.

(Mrs. Freudenschuss-Reichl, Austria)

In my delegation's view, the resolution we have just adopted is a very concrete and positive step in the ongoing process of the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in these fields.

I should like to add that participating in the arduous process of informal consultations was a very rewarding experience for my delegation, because of the constructiveness of the contributions made by all partners, because of the spirit of compromise that prevailed and that enabled us to find consensus solutions and, last but not least, because of the able and patient leadership of the Permanent Representative of Fiji, Ambassador Thompson, in his capacity as Chairman of the informal consultations.

My delegation looks forward to continuing working on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields constructively and creatively.

Mr. ZHANG Yesui (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The Chinese delegation welcomes the adoption by consensus of draft resolution A/45/L.49. We believe that this is an important step in the process of the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. We hope that the introduction of the new Economic and Social Council and other reform measures will be implemented effectively and will achieve the desired results.

The Chinese delegation has always actively supported reform by the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. We believe that the objective of reform is to improve the efficiency of the United Nations, so that the Organization will respond more effectively to the need for international cooperation in the economic field, particularly with regard to the development needs of the developing countries.

(Mr. Zhang Yesui, China)

We believe that reforming the United Nations in the economic and social fields is a very complex question, involving many matters that are complementary and related to each other. It also involves almost every aspect of the activities of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. Therefore, in this respect there should be a step-by-step approach to reform and we should not rush into anything hasty. If we do so, we shall never achieve any of the desired results. We note with satisfaction that the resolution we have just adopted by consensus basically reflects that approach.

We believe that the resolution represents a very good beginning to reforming the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. Therefore, we believe that the views of various parties must be sought on any important measures in that regard, and such measures should be adopted by consensus.

Before I conclude, I wish on behalf of my delegation to express our special thanks to the Permanent Representative of Fiji for his excellent work in the process of informal consultations. His experience and diplomatic skills, as well as the patience that he demonstrated in the process, contributed greatly to the progress we achieved in the consultations. My thanks also go to all the countries and groups of countries that participated in the informal consultations for their contributions.

(Mr. Zhang Yesui, China)

Our particular thanks go to the Group of 77 - which actually represents 128 countries - for its special efforts and contributions.

It is our hope that the spirit of constructive cooperation demonstrated during this process will continue to be manifested in the coming process of reform.

The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 117.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: At its next plenary meeting, to be held on Thursday 16 May, the General Assembly will consider the report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 157, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara". It will also consider under item 86, "Special economic and disaster relief assistance", a draft resolution on emergency assistance to Haiti.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.

UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/45/PV.76
17 May 1991

ENGLISH

Forty-fifth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 17 May 1991, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. PEERTHUM (Mauritius)
(Vice-President)

- Special economic and disaster relief assistance: [86] (continued)
- Financing of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group: Report of the Fifth Committee [132] (continued)
- Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara [157] (continued)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the Official Records of the General Assembly.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week, to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 86 (continued)

SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE: DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/45/L.50/Rev.1)

The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly will first consider under agenda item 86 entitled, Special economic and disaster relief assistance, the question of special emergency assistance to Haiti. In this connection, a draft resolution has been issued as document A/45/L.50/Rev.1. I now call on the representative of Ecuador to introduce draft resolution A/45/L.50/Rev.1.

Mr. AYALA LASSO (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): In my capacity as Chairman of the Latin American and Caribbean Group for this month, I am extremely pleased to submit for the consideration of the General Assembly the draft resolution on special emergency assistance to Haiti in document A/45/L.50/Rev.1. This draft resolution has the unanimous support of all of the members of the Latin American and Caribbean Group. The following countries are its sponsors: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Spain, Suriname, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

The tragic economic and social situation being faced by the Haitian people is so serious that the Permanent Representative of Haiti has described it as a "permanent emergency". In the report contained in document A/45/1002, the Secretary-General tells us that Haiti's needs are so acute that the population has been compelled to consume even the seed it had set aside for future crops. In other words, the current state of affairs in Haiti is so grave that even the future of that country is being consumed.

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

In this economic and social emergency, we should offer special applause and support to the efforts of the noble people of Haiti to conduct themselves in a democratic manner and to seek in their everyday practices to strengthen the institutions that are indispensable for achieving their legitimate aspirations.

The report of the Secretary-General had its basis in resolution 45/257, which the General Assembly adopted without a vote last December.

The preambular part of the draft resolution before the Assembly notes the worsening of the economic and social problems affecting Haiti and the urgent need to launch, as soon as possible, an emergency programme that expresses the support of the international community for the democratization and reconstruction process under way in Haiti.

Against that background, the draft resolution renews the Assembly's appeal to Member States, international financial institutions, the specialized agencies and organizations and programmes of the United Nations system to provide the special assistance which the Haitian people requires to strengthen its democratic life and to improve its economic and social condition. It must always be remembered that democratization is often affected, and can even founder, when economic and social programmes hobble, weaken and diminish the prestige of freely elected governments. Haitian democracy needs the full and universal support of the community of nations.

In the draft resolution the Secretary-General is also requested to provide all possible assistance to the launching of a programme of action that will have immediate benefits for the Haitian people.

Finally, the draft resolution expresses the hope that that programme will be ready for implementation before the meeting of the Consultative Group of the World Bank, scheduled for Paris in June 1991.

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

The sponsors of the draft resolution know that international solidarity with Haiti is an unshirkable duty, and they are prepared to cooperate fully so that the legitimate aspirations of the Haitian people can begin to be met in an atmosphere of freedom and democracy that can foster social justice through which the Haitian population can, first, achieve the same level of development as the rest of the countries of the region and, then, together with those countries, attain the deserved realization of their hopes.

The sponsors hope the General Assembly will adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to announce that Saint Kitts and Nevis has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/45/L.50/Rev.1.

We shall now take a decision on that draft resolution. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/45/L.50/Rev.1?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 45/257 B).

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Haiti.

Mr. AUGUSTE (Haiti) (interpretation from French): Some coincidences can be viewed as good omens and as signs of a harmonious conjunction of the elements that govern the fate of a country.

It was at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, under the presidency of Ambassador De Marco - unanimously praised for its substance and its charismatic form - and on the final day - always a Friday - of two segments of that session that the Assembly considered draft resolutions concerning my country. The resolution just adopted broadens and clarifies the resolution adopted on 21 December with respect to its implementation.

(Mr. Auguste, Haiti)

Those who supported and sponsored these resolutions know the unbreakable link between the economy and politics, between development and democracy, which the Secretary-General stressed on 18 April in his message to the European Parliament at Strasbourg in terms that deserve to be repeated:

"But the more democracy progresses, the clearer its fragility will become unless it is accompanied by a tangible improvement in the living conditions of the poorest. Democracy must not be assimilated into poverty and need."

I have no doubt that everyone here accepts that. That point of view, outlined in the United Nations Charter, has become an axiom - even a truism. Democracy is illusory if it is not accompanied at all stages of its development by economic and social improvements and a minimum standard of living.

Moreover, there is an element of urgency - not the extreme urgency of catastrophes and cataclysms that are so obvious and that make a sensational appeal to the imagination, but a silent, ongoing but pernicious and threatening urgency that comes from a continuing deterioration in social indices resulting from persistent economic stagnation and from the erosion of production and the social environment.

These social indices must change from explosive red to a hopeful green so that freedom and adequate food become an everyday reality.

The tragedy is that we must find the means. This is where the action of the international community must be felt, where cooperation by peoples and governments must emerge and take concrete form. I am grateful to all present for having understood this and for having been prepared to embrace this new ethic of shared responsibility.

(Mr. Auguste, Haiti)

The massive support for this draft resolution frees me from the need to belabour this point. It is a global response, comforting and exemplary, to the legitimacy of the aspirations of the Government and people of Haiti, who are determined, with the support of the international community, to assume their destiny and to take charge of the improvement of the nation's living conditions.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 86.

AGENDA ITEMS 132 (continued) AND 157 (continued)

FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS TRANSITION ASSISTANCE GROUP: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/45/1014)

FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION FOR THE REFERENDUM IN WESTERN SAHARA: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/45/1013)

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 132 and 157.

I now call on the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Shamel Elsayed Nasser of Egypt, to introduce the reports of the Fifth Committee in one intervention.

Mr. NASSER (Egypt), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee (interpretation from Arabic): I have the honour today to present to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 157, "Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara", and 132, "Financing of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group".

The report of the Fifth Committee on item 157, "Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara", is contained in document A/45/1013. As stated in paragraph 2 of this report, the Committee

(Mr. Nasser, Rapporteur, Fifth Committee)

considered item 157 at its 57th to 59th meetings. At its 59th meeting, the Chairman of the Fifth Committee put before the Committee the text of the draft resolution contained in paragraph 6 of the report before the Assembly. I shall highlight only certain aspects of this draft resolution.

In operative paragraph 1, it is recalled that, in accordance with Article 17 of the Charter of the United Nations, it is the General Assembly that shall consider and approve the budget of the Organization.

In operative paragraph 2, the Assembly would approve, in principle, the budgetary estimates proposed by the Secretary-General for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara. The amount involved is $176,868,000 net for the mandate period approved by the Security Council in its resolution 690 (1991).

Furthermore, the Assembly would decide, in operative paragraph 3, to appropriate an initial amount of $140,000,000 net in accordance with the implementation timetable set out by the Secretary-General in his report. The Secretary-General is requested in operative paragraph 4 to submit a detailed performance report for the first six months of the operation to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

In operative paragraph 5, the Assembly would decide to consider at its forty-sixth session the appropriations required to finance the mission for the remaining three-month mandate period in the light of the Secretary-General's performance report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 132, "Financing of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document

(Mr. Nasser, Rapporteur, Fifth Committee)

A/45/1014. The Committee considered this item at its 53rd, 54th, 56th and 60th meetings on 29 and 30 April and 2 and 17 May 1991. Draft resolution A/C.5/45/L.29 referred to in paragraph 8 of the report was put before the Fifth Committee by its Chairman at the Committee's 60th meeting, on 17 May 1991.

In operative paragraph 2, the Assembly would note that the net estimated cost of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group has been revised and that Member States' financial obligations to the Group should be adjusted accordingly.

In connection with operative paragraph 5, I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to changes that were made to the text before the adoption of the draft resolution by the Fifth Committee. As revised, operative paragraph 5 reads as follows:

> "Invites Member States to consider the utilization of the credits due to them to be set off against their assessed contributions for other United Nations peace-keeping operations in accordance with the Financial Rules and Regulations".

The text of the draft resolution, when reissued, will reflect these changes.

Finally, I should draw the Assembly's attention to paragraph 12 of the draft resolution, in which those Member States that are still in arrears are urged to make every effort to pay their assessed contributions to the Group.

The draft resolution was adopted without a vote.

The PRESIDENT: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of delegations regarding the various recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant Official Records.

I should like to remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that:

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee".

I should like to remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed with the voting in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee.

The Assembly will first consider the report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 132, entitled, "Financing of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (A/45/1014). The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended in paragraph 8 of the report. The text of the draft resolution is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/45/L.29, as revised in the Fifth Committee.

(The President)

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 45/265).

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 132.

(The President)

The Assembly will now consider the report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 157, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (A/45/1013).

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution contained in paragraph 6 of the report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 45/266).

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 157.

The meeting rose at 4.05 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

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General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/45/PV.77
10 June 1991

ENGLISH

Forty-fifth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 10 June 1991, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. PEERTHUM (Mauritius)
(Vice-President)

- Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (Article 19 of the Charter) [125] (continued)

- Adoption of the agenda and organization of work of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly and allocation of items: request for the inclusion of an additional item submitted by the Secretary-General [8] (continued)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the Official Records of the General Assembly.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week, to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

In the absence of the President, Mr. Peerthum (Mauritius), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 125 (continued)

SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (ARTICLE 19 OF THE CHARTER) (A/45/1004/Add.2)

The PRESIDENT: Before turning to the item on our agenda for this morning, I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to document A/45/1004/Add.2, which contains a letter addressed to me by the Secretary-General informing me that since the issuance of his communications dated 29 April 1991 and 13 May 1991 El Salvador and Nicaragua have made the necessary payment to reduce their arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 8 (continued)

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK OF THE FORTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS: REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM SUBMITTED BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/45/242 and Add.1)

The PRESIDENT: This morning the General Assembly will consider the Secretary-General's request for the inclusion of an additional item on the agenda of the forty-fifth session.

In this connection, a note by and a report of the Secretary-General have been circulated in documents A/45/242 and Add.1. In his note the Secretary-General, pursuant to rule 15 of the rules of procedure, requests that an additional item of an important and urgent character, entitled

(The President)

"Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador", be placed on the agenda. Owing to the nature of the item, he also requests that the item be allocated to the Fifth Committee for consideration.

Under the circumstances of the present case, may I take it that the General Assembly agrees that the provision of rule 40 of the rules of procedure, which would require a meeting of the General Committee on the question of the inclusion of an additional item on the agenda, may be waived?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: May I also take it that the Assembly wishes to include an additional item on the agenda, to read "Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador", and to allocate that item to the Fifth Committee for consideration?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The Chairman of the Fifth Committee will be informed of the decision just taken.

Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to inform representatives that the Assembly will meet next week, on a date to be announced in the Journal, to consider the report of the Fifth Committee on the financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.

UNITED
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General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/45/PV.78
21 June 1991

ENGLISH

Forty-fifth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 21 June 1991, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. PEERTHUM (Mauritius)
(Vice-President)

- Volcano eruption in the Philippines
- Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador: report of the Fifth Committee [158]
- Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: request submitted by the United States of America for the reopening of agenda items 127 and 128 [8] (continued)
- Programme of work

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the Official Records of the General Assembly.

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Peerthum (Mauritius), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

VOLCANO ERUPTION IN THE PHILIPPINES

The PRESIDENT: Before turning to the first item on our agenda for this morning, may I, on behalf of all the members of the Assembly, extend to the Government and the people of the Philippines, recently struck by devastating volcanic eruptions, our deepest sympathy at this major natural disaster, which has caused tragic loss of life and extensive material damage.

May I also express the hope that the international community will show its solidarity and respond promptly and generously to any request for help.

Mr. ORDONEZ (Philippines): On behalf of President Corazon C. Aquino and of the Philippine Government, I wish to convey the appreciation of the entire Filipino nation for the generous assistance in the form of cash, construction materials and medical supplies donated to the victims of the disaster left by the eruption of Mount Pinatubo. Among the countries which responded immediately to the humanitarian call were Japan, the United States, Canada, the Republic of Korea, Australia and Germany. I am sure there are many others. Appropriate acknowledgements of these humanitarian acts are now being prepared.

The response of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO) was very quick. On 17 June 1991 I received a letter from Mr. Philippe Boullé, Director of the New York Office, which I wish to quote. He wrote:

"I should like to refer to the disaster which struck your country during the second week of June 1991. For your information I am forwarding herewith the first information report issued by UNDRO giving

(Mr. Ordonez, Philippines)

all available details of the disaster to date. Please rest assured that we shall spare no efforts to assist your Government in dealing with the disaster."

In the Philippines Mr. Kevin McGrath, the UNDRO/United Nations Development Programme representative, has very effectively coordinated the delivery of assistance from various United Nations agencies and organizations.

The latest reports released by official sources indicate that 227 persons have died, that tens of thousands are homeless and that evacuation centres have been set up to give temporary shelter to the fleeing thousands. The food-producing capacity of the rich regions known as the Central Plains of Luzon, or the rice granary of the Philippines, has been severely damaged. The damage to infrastructures is enormous. The magnitude of the disruption can be gauged from the fact that radar data show that an ash cloud was detected 18,000 metres above sea level on 19 June and that ash fallout was recorded as far away as Singapore and Cambodia.

This calamity comes at a very unfortunate time in our national drive to attain economic stability and to preserve a democratic way of life, which we have tenaciously fought for in the last 93 years. It is largely because of the achievements of President Aquino in responding to the tasks of nation-building through the ways of democracy that the Pio Manzu International Research Centre of Italy named her "Woman of Peace of 1991", together with the naming of General Norman Schwarzkopf "Man of Peace 1991". This is the last year of Mrs. Aquino's presidential term; it will be very demanding, because it will be further complicated by the economic setback in the wake of the Mount Pinatubo disaster. But there is no doubt that she is encouraged by the enormous, wholehearted support of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations throughout the world.

(Mr. Ordonez, Philippines)

The mechanism for responding to calamities such as has been experienced from the Mount Pinatubo eruption was long ago put in place by the National Disaster Coordinating Council, now under the chairmanship of Mr. Fidel Ramos, National Defence Secretary, a body which I had the honour of serving before my assumption of responsibility in the United Nations. The early warning system of the Philippine Volcanology Commission and the prompt reaction of the National Disaster Coordinating Council undoubtedly averted a more serious disaster. The energetic response of all civic organizations is truly heartwarming. In addition to these agencies, the President has constituted a Pinatubo task force for comprehensive rehabilitation of devastated areas.

I believe that the calamity from which the Philippines is now reeling makes it all the more imperative that the United Nations should broaden its own programme of disaster prevention under its International Space Year agenda. Through every grey cloud there must some be some ray of hope, such as the proclamation by the United Nations of 1992 as International Space Year. This programme aims to coordinate various satellites in orbit to warn of potential floods, landslides and volcano eruptions, under the heading "Space and Disaster Prevention, Procedures and Relief". The leadership of Louis Walter of the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in this worthy endeavour is most welcome. His influential voice has been heard to say: "the world has a global observation system, but it is not being adequately used".

My Government's policy of responding to the needs of the time is not merely rehabilitative. President Aquino has announced that livelihood projects will be started in the disaster areas in order that the productive

(Mr. Ordonez, Philippines)

capacity of the distressed communities can be quickly restored. I firmly believe that the ashes, lava and burning rocks spewed by Mount Pinatubo will neither quiet nor halt the industrious and hardworking people of the Philippines. The recovery from the disaster will be hastened by the very valuable assistance which the Philippines is now receiving from its friends all over the world.

AGENDA ITEM 158

FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN EL SALVADOR: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/45/1026)

The PRESIDENT: I call on the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Shamel Elsayed Nasser of Egypt, to introduce the Committee's report.

Mr. NASSER (Egypt), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee: I have the honour, once again, of presenting to the General Assembly the report (A/45/1026) of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 158, "Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador".

As stated in paragraph 2 of the report, the Fifth Committee considered this item at its 61st and 62nd meetings, on 17 and 19 June 1991. At its 62nd meeting, the Chairman of the Committee put the text of the draft resolution contained in paragraph 7 of the report to the Committee for decision. I shall highlight only some aspects of this draft resolution.

In operative paragraph 1, the Assembly would decide to appropriate an amount of $13,000,000 net for pre-implementation costs for the operation of the Mission for the six-month period from 1 July to 31 December 1991, and requests the Secretary-General to establish a special account in accordance with paragraph 15 of document A/45/242/Add.1.

In operative paragraph 2, the Assembly would decide, as an ad hoc arrangement, to apportion the amount of $13,000,000 net among Member States in accordance with the composition of groups set out in paragraphs 3 and 4 of General Assembly resolutions 43/232 and 44/192 B.

Furthermore, the Assembly, in operative paragraph 6, would decide to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador in an amount not to exceed $9,200,000 gross for the period from 1 January to 30 June 1992.

In operative paragraph 8, the Secretary-General is requested to take all necessary action to ensure that the Mission is administered with a maximum of efficiency and economy.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote.

The PRESIDENT: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Fifth Committee that is before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendation of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of General Assembly decision 34/401 the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee".

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendation contained in the report of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we shall proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution contained in paragraph 7 of the report of the Fifth Committee (A/45/1026).

(The President)

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 45/267).

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of El Salvador.

Mr. MELENDEZ BARAHONA (El Salvador) (interpretation from Spanish): First of all, on behalf of the Government of El Salvador, and on my own behalf, I wish to express our solidarity with the Government and people of the Philippines in connection with the tragic events resulting from the natural disasters which have struck the country recently. We hope that the international community will continue to show solidarity in helping the people of the Philippines overcome the damaging consequences of these events.

Turning to the business now before us, I shall begin by saying how pleased my delegation is to be taking part in this resumed session, in particular because the principal item, "Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador", has a direct bearing on my country.

The approval by consensus of the report of the Fifth Committee and, similarly, the adoption of the resolution authorizing the financing of the Observer Mission - which will be an integrated peace-keeping operation and will have, in its first phase, the mandate of verifying that the human rights agreements between the Government of El Salvador and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), signed in San José, Costa Rica in July 1990, are being fulfilled - reflect the international community's understanding concerning the necessity and the importance of having an international, impartial and reliable mechanism to verify and guarantee the commitments between the parties, thereby helping achieve the priority objective of peace in El Salvador.

(Mr. Melendez Barahona, El Salvador)

We are convinced, as we have said on various occasions, that the implementation of Security Council resolution 693 (1991), even in a partial manner, is yet one more step forward in the peace-making process in El Salvador; we hope that very soon the international verification mechanism will be able to fulfil its mandate thoroughly, to the extent that my Government and the FMLN arrive at the necessary political accords to agree on a cease-fire and the end of the armed confrontation which has afflicted the Salvadorian people for over a decade.

Getting the verification machinery moving is of particular relevance and import by virtue of the fact that the parties will take on the obligation to cooperate with the Observer Mission in the fulfilment of its mandate; this, we believe, will in its turn have a deterrent and containing effect on the factors which give rise to violence and will result in an improvement in the situation in El Salvador in respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

It is important to note that, despite the obstacles which have cropped up throughout the negotiating process, which was restarted in Geneva in April 1990 under the auspices of the Secretary-General, substantial progress has been made; the agreements reached so far on human rights and constitutional reforms merit particular note. Regardless of political and military events in El Salvador, the process has continued, because the conviction exists that it is imperative to put an end to the armed confrontation by means of a negotiated political solution.

It will be understood that the points under discussion are becoming the more difficult and controversial the further the process advances; this is true of the present stage in the negotiations - in Queretaro, Mexico - which, in accordance with the Caracas agenda of 21 May 1990, is attempting to reach agreements on the armed forces and the cease-fire.

(Mr. Melendez Barahona, El Salvador)

None the less, my delegation is optimistic about the progress being made and about the results of the talks in this stage as a result of the announcement made to the press last Tuesday, 17 June, by the heads of the delegations of the Government of El Salvador and of the FMLN, in which they stated that they are close to reaching a cease-fire agreement. They were in agreement that there was a consensus on 95 per cent of the aspects related to the armed forces, and added that the Queretaro meeting might be the last or next-to-last in the negotiating process.

Although the 5 per cent which still remains is very complex, the prospects for a prompt cease-fire are promising, and, once that is achieved, the fact that there is an international verification mechanism will facilitate the implementation of the undertakings made by the parties, even though, in accordance with Security Council resolution 693 (1991), such tasks are subject to prior approval by the Council.

(Mr. Melendez Barahona, El Salvador)

As President Alfredo Cristiani has repeatedly said, the peace process in El Salvador is irreversible. There is no justifying violence and armed struggle as means of achieving political objectives, especially in the light of the profound changes in the international order, where there is a basic trend towards cooperation and solidarity to consolidate democracy and human freedoms in a climate enabling people fully to enjoy the fruits of development.

I wish in conclusion to reiterate our thanks for the support and solidarity of the international community aimed at swiftly achieving peace in El Salvador through the negotiating process under the auspices of the Secretary-General. In particular I take this opportunity to thank the delegation of Finland for its dedication in the preparation of the draft resolution submitted to the Fifth Committee and the delegation of Japan for its statement before that Committee in support of the peace process in El Salvador and the creation of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador. We share the belief of those delegations that this verification machinery will help improve the situation in El Salvador and help the Secretary-General fulfil his mission as a peace mediator.

The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 158.

AGENDA ITEM 8 (continued)

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK: REQUEST SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA FOR THE REOPENING OF AGENDA ITEMS 127 AND 128 (A/45/1023)

The PRESIDENT: I should like to invite the attention of members to the letter dated 13 June 1991 from the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America addressed to the Secretary-General (A/45/1023), by which the United States of America, and on behalf of Australia, Canada, Japan,

(The President)

the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, requests that agenda items 127, "United Nations common system", and 128, "United Nations pension system", be reopened as soon as possible during the forty-fifth session in order to enable the Assembly to consider the impact on the United Nations common system and pension system of the decision of the International Telecommunication Union Administrative Council to implement unilaterally a pension purchasing protection insurance plan as well as the decision of the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union to grant a special post allowance to the professional staff.

May I take it that the Assembly has no objection, in the light of that request, to reopening consideration of agenda items 127 and 128?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: Members will recall that at its third plenary meeting, held on 21 September 1990, the Assembly allocated items 127 and 128 to the Fifth Committee for consideration.

May I take it that the Assembly again wishes to allocate those items to the Fifth Committee?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The Chairman of the Fifth Committee will be informed of the decision just taken concerning the Fifth Committee.

I call on the representative of the United Kingdom.

Mr. HARKIN (United Kingdom): Since the date of the letter from the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States (A/45/1023) there have been developments in the International Labour Organisation relating to section V of resolution 45/242. My delegation believes these also deserve to

(Mr. Harkin, United Kingdom)

be considered by the Fifth Committee in addition to the developments in the International Telecommunication Union. We hope that procedural suggestion will prove acceptable.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members that the next plenary meeting of the General Assembly will be held next week on Friday, 28 June, to consider the report of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 127 and 128.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.

UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/45/PV.79
28 June 1991

ENGLISH

Forty-fifth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 28 June 1991, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. PEERTHUM (Mauritius)
(Vice-President)

- United Nations common system; United Nations pension system: report of the Fifth Committee [127] [128] (continued)

- Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: request submitted by the Secretary-General for the reopening of agenda item 131 [8] (continued)

- Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa: letter from the Secretary-General [34] (continued)

- Programme of work

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the Official Records of the General Assembly.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week, to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

91-64237/A 5268V (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 127 AND 128 (continued)

UNITED NATIONS COMMON SYSTEM; UNITED NATIONS PENSION SYSTEM: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/45/1031)

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will first consider the report of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 127, United Nations common system, and 128, United Nations pension system, contained in document A/45/1031.

I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Shamel Elsayed Nasser of Egypt, to introduce the report of the Fifth Committee.

Mr. NASSER (Egypt), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee: I have the honour once again to present to the General Assembly the report of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 127, United Nations common system, and 128, United Nations pension system, which is contained in document A/45/1031.

As stated in paragraph 2 of its report, the Committee considered these two agenda items at its 63rd and 64th meetings on 26 and 27 June 1991. In paragraph 4 of the report it states that at the 64th meeting the Chairman of the Committee put before the Committee the text of the draft resolution, as orally revised, contained in paragraph 7 of the report.

When introducing the draft resolution, the Chairman of the Fifth Committee noted that the Committee was fully aware of and sensitive to the Geneva staff's concerns with regard to the pension question. It was for this reason that the Assembly mandated comprehensive studies by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and the United Nations Pension Board. He recalled that the Committee had felt that a unilateral solution would not be the answer to these concerns and that requests had been addressed by the

(Mr. Nasser, Rapporteur, Fifth Committee)

Committee not to take unilateral action and to refrain from implementing any such action that may have been contemplated. He added that the Committee firmly believed in the preservation of the United Nations common system and that the solution should be found within the framework of the United Nations common system.

The draft resolution contains eight preambular paragraphs and seven operative paragraphs. In the first three preambular paragraphs, the Assembly recalls and addresses the role of the ICSC relating to the establishment of the conditions of entitlement for staff.

In the fourth preambular paragraph, the Assembly recalls that the Committee has previously requested the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board to study the proposal of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

In the fifth preambular paragraph, it notes that in resolution 45/242 the Pension Board has given priority to the development of a long-term approach to the determination of initial local currency pensions.

In the sixth preambular paragraph, it expresses concern about the potential impact on the common system and the pension system of the decision of the seventy-eighth session of the International Labour Conference to proceed with its proposal to establish a voluntary thrift benefit fund.

The last preambular paragraph takes account of the statements made in the Fifth Committee at its 63rd meeting.

In paragraph 1 the Assembly expresses deep concern and regret at the actions taken unilaterally by ITU and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) without due regard for their obligations under the common system.

(Mr. Nasser, Rapporteur, Fifth Committee)

Paragraph 2 reaffirms that the conditions of service of the staff should be determined in accordance with principles aimed at the development of a single unified international civil service through the application of common personnel standards, methods and arrangements.

In paragraph 3, it emphasizes the obligation of all organizations of the common system to consult and cooperate fully with the ICSC and the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board on matters relating to conditions of service and pensions.

In paragraph 4, the ICSC and the United Nations are requested to examine the implications of the decision by the two organizations and to report to the Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

In paragraph 5 it reiterates that this matter should be given highest priority.

In paragraph 6, the Assembly reiterates its appeal to the organizations of the United Nations common system to refrain from seeking to establish for their staff, whether by provisions in their staff regulations or by other means, additional entitlement and benefits, as such actions would be detrimental to the common system, under which all staff should receive equal treatment, irrespective of their employing organizations.

In paragraph 7, it requests the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC), to urge all Executive Heads to cooperate fully with the ICSC in the discharge of its responsibilities under article 1 of its Statute.

The draft resolution, as orally revised, was adopted by the Fifth Committee, without a vote.

The PRESIDENT: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Fifth Committee which is before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendation of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that:

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

(The President)

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendation contained in the report of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee contained in paragraph 7 of its report (A/45/1031). The draft resolution, entitled "United Nations common system and United Nations pension system", was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 45/268).

The PRESIDENT: We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda items 127 and 128.

AGENDA ITEM 8 (continued)

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK: REQUEST SUBMITTED BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR THE REOPENING OF AGENDA ITEM 131 (A/45/1030)

The PRESIDENT: I should like to invite the attention of members to a note by the Secretary-General (A/45/1030), requesting that agenda item 131, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission" (UNAVEM II) be reopened to enable the Assembly to consider the financing proposals of the Secretary-General that would permit UNAVEM II to undertake its new mandate. In light of this request, may I take it that the Assembly decides to reopen consideration of agenda item 131?

I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: Members will recall that, at its 3rd plenary meeting on 21 September 1990, the Assembly allocated this item to the Fifth Committee. May I take it that the Assembly again wishes to allocate this item to the Fifth Committee?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The Chairman of the Fifth Committee will be informed of the decision just taken concerning the Fifth Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 34 (continued)

POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA: LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/45/1029)

The PRESIDENT: In connection with this item, the Assembly has before it a letter from the Secretary-General, issued as document A/45/1029, proposing to postpone until a later date, prior to the closure of the forty-fifth session, the submission of the report called for by General Assembly resolution 44/244 of 17 September 1990 and seeking the Assembly's concurrence with the proposed postponement.

May I take it that the Assembly concurs with the proposed postponement?

I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 34.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members that the next plenary meeting of the General Assembly will be announced in the Journal.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.